VZCZCXRO7158
PP RUEHPA
DE RUEHAB #0802 2121751
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 311751Z JUL 07
FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
TO RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0182
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3318
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 000802

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

IO FOR ODELL
USUN FOR TRASTYMAN, MORRIS
AF FOR BITTRICK, BANKS, PLUMB

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/31/2017
TAGS: KPKO UNSC PREL IV
SUBJECT: MOROCCO BATTALION APPEARS TO REMAIN ON DUTY; SORO QUIETLY SUPPORTS THEIR CONTINUED ROLE

REF: ABIDJAN 781

Classified By: EconChief EMassinga, Reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (C) Emboff's security detail during a recent trip to Bouake (septel) was from the Moroccan battalion, recently the subject of controversy relating to allegations of sexual misconduct (reftel A). The security detail was professional, courteous, and well-disciplined. Emboff traveled around the town of Bouake extensively; there was no/no negative reaction, or even notice, from the city's citizenry, although the allegations were widely known and circulated. It was very clear to Emboff that despite ONUCI public statements that the MorBatt was confined to barracks and suspended from duties, they remain very much on the job.

¶2. (C) During a July 25 conversation with Forces Nouvelles Deputy Director of Cabinet Cisse Sindou, Sindou said the FNs had sent ONUCI a confidential letter asking the Moroccans be retained, and that punishment be assessed individually, not collectively. The letter noted that the Moroccan battalion was perhaps ONUCI's best, and that it would be needed for the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration phase of the peace process. The mayor of a large town near Bouake which hosts a MorBatt base wrote a similar, public letter to ONUCI, and has publicly called on the UN to retain the troops and allow them to patrol.
HOOKS